

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

August 25, 1982

Dear Mr. Dingell:

This is in response to your letter of July 19, on behalf of your constituent. He asked if there is any law which prohibits the US from directing medical supplies, food or weapons to the Afghan freedom fighters. He also requested comments on the types and amounts of assistance now being sent to Afghanistan. B6

There is no US law which specifically refers to the Afghan freedom fighters. However, there are several laws and regulations which apply to Afghanistan and cover citizens of that country, whether they support the current Kabul regime or the resistance. Information on the relevant laws and regulations is enclosed.

The United States has been very generous in its support to the almost 3 million Afghan refugees who have fled to Pakistan. This country annually pledges approximately one-third of the total international effort, which is funneled through the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (the international community however bears only about half the financial burden of the Afghan refugees, with Pakistan itself paying the other half of the total cost). The US contribution to Afghan refugee relief since 1980 totals about \$250 million, a large part of which has been in surplus food commodities. Some medical assistance has been provided through the US contribution.

We are aware that much of what we send to the refugee camps in Pakistan indirectly supports the Afghan resistance since the nationalist freedom fighters fighting the Soviet invaders of their country know that their families in refugee camps in Pakistan are being cared for.

As a matter of general policy the State Department does not comment on intelligence matters. I am sure that you recognize that the question of sending arms to the Afghan freedom fighters is a delicate one which has political implications for the entire region. In any case, I should point out that the Afghan freedom fighters are increasingly well armed and have demonstrated their effectiveness. 1201

The Honorable
John D. Dingell,
House of Representatives

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We believe that perhaps the most important role for the United States and other concerned nations is to see that the international spotlight is kept on the Soviet aggression and to keep diplomatic pressure on the Soviets for negotiations to end the Afghan tragedy. We believe that international pressure is as necessary as internal resistance in making the Soviets realize the need to work toward a negotiated political solution. Diplomacy is a slow route and one which must necessarily stay largely out of the public eye. However we remain hopeful that this strategy may be having some impact on the Soviets.

I hope that this information will be of assistance to your constituent. Please write me again if you think I can provide further information.

With warmest regards,

Sincerely,



Powell A. Moore
Assistant Secretary for
Congressional Relations

Enclosure:
As stated.

1202

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